

# Community nutrition

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- **Community nutrition is an evolving area of practice with the broad focus of serving the population at large.**

- Historically **public health** was defined as  
"the science and art of
- preventing disease,
- prolonging life, and
- promoting health and
- efficiency through organized community effort, so organizing these benefits as to enable every citizen to realize his birthright of health and longevity" (Window, 1920).

- **In the public health model the client is the community, a geopolitical entity.**
- **The focus of the traditional public health approach is primary prevention (health promotion) as opposed to secondary prevention (risk reduction) or tertiary prevention (treatment and rehabilitation) (Egan, 1994).**
- **Changes in the health care system, technology, and attitudes of the nutrition consumer have been influences in expanding the responsibilities of community nutrition.**



- The scope of community based nutrition encompasses efforts to prevent disease and promote positive health and nutritional status for individuals and groups in setting where they live and work, the focus is on well-being and building potential for the possible quality of life.
- "Well-being" goes beyond the used constraints of physical and mental health and includes other factors that affect the quality of life within a community.

- **Community members need a safe environment and quite housing, food, income, employment, and education.**
- The potential audience for programming and services any segment of the population, and the program or service should reflect the diversity of the designated community.
- **Politics, geography, culture, ethnicity, ages, genders, socioeconomic issues, and overall health status help to defined community.**
- Along with primary prevention, community nutrition provides links to programs and services with goes cooking classes and demonstrations are an example of nutrition programming ans services offered under the community nutrition umbrella.

- Depending on the audience, the program is primary prevention (the general public),
- second prevention (sessions for people at high risk for been disease) or tertiary prevention (support groups for the with cardiovascular disease).

- In the traditional model, funding sources for public health efforts were monies allocated from official source (government) at the local, state, or federal level.
- Part of the changing "turf" in the community is the sharing of the responsibility vices are funded alone or in partnership between a broad range of sources, including public (government), private, and voluntary health sectors.
- As public source funding has declined, the need for private funding has become more crucial.



- In the example, heart-healthy cooking classes might receive funding from the American Heart Association (a voluntary, nonprofit agency), a health care insurer (nonprofit or for-profit agency), a supermarket or business (for-profit entity) or a demonstration grant from a government source.
- The potential size and diversity of a designated "community" make collaboration critical.
- A single agency may be unable to find or deliver the full range of services.

- In addition, it is likely the funding will be services or product (in-kind) rather than cash.
- Creative funding and management skills are crucial for community practitioner.

# Nutrition Practice in the Community

- Nutrition professionals recognize that successful delivery of food and nutrition services involves actively engaging people in their own community.
- The pool of nutrition professionals delivering medical nutrition therapy and nutrition education in community-based or public health facilities continues to expand.
- Although the settings may vary, there are three core functions in community nutrition practice.



# Nutrition Practice in the Community

- The three "core" functions of public health are: community assessment, policy development, and public health assurance (IOM, 1988).
- These areas are also the components of community nutrition practice, especially community assessment, also known as needs assessments shape policy development and the components of ensuring that the nutritional health of the public is protected.

# Nutrition Practice in the Community

- The expansion of community-based practice beyond the scope of traditional public health has opened new employment opportunities for nutrition professionals.
- Such professionals are found in agencies or organizations that provide primary care, promote health, and prevent chronic disease in the community.

- **Nutrition professionals also serve as consultants or maintain community-based private practices.**
- **Some settings for community nutrition in practice are public health agencies (state and local).**